

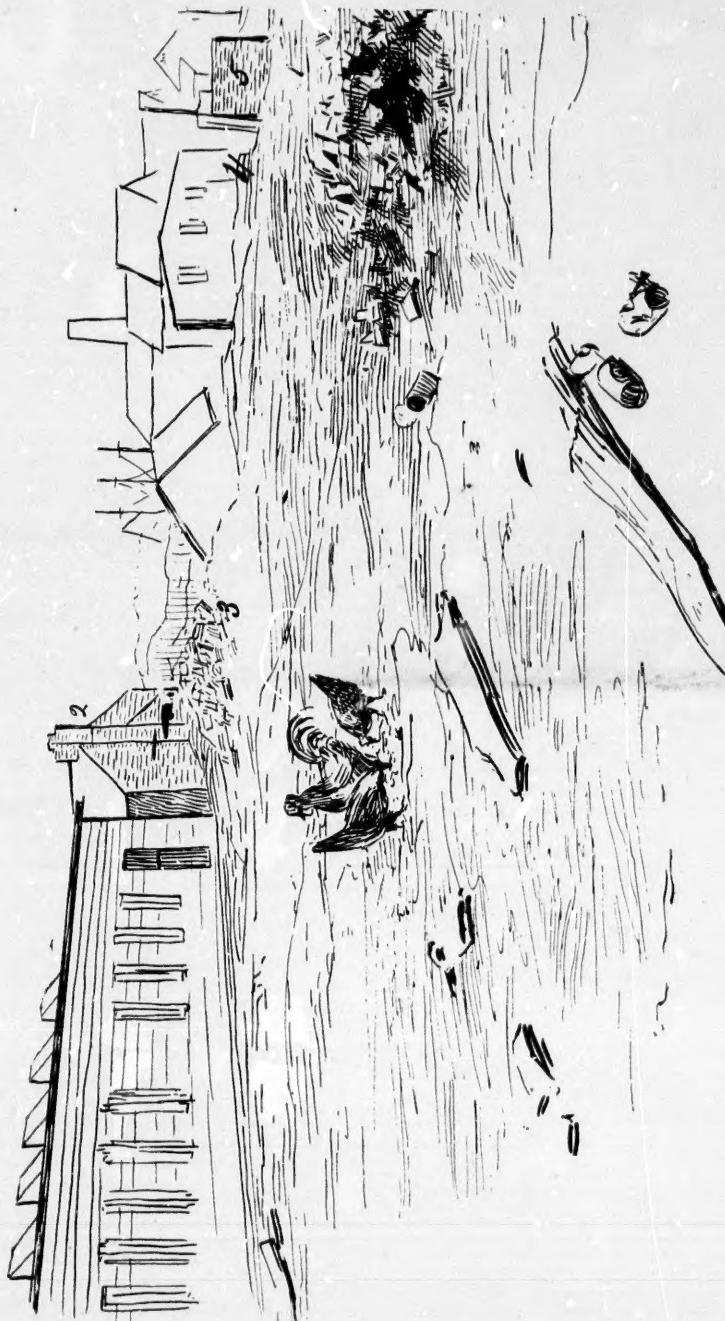
The Story of a Crime.

THE HARRIS LAND JOB AND ITS RESULTS.

How the Leading Industry of Saint John
was Crushed Out of Existence
and the Public Money
Wasted.

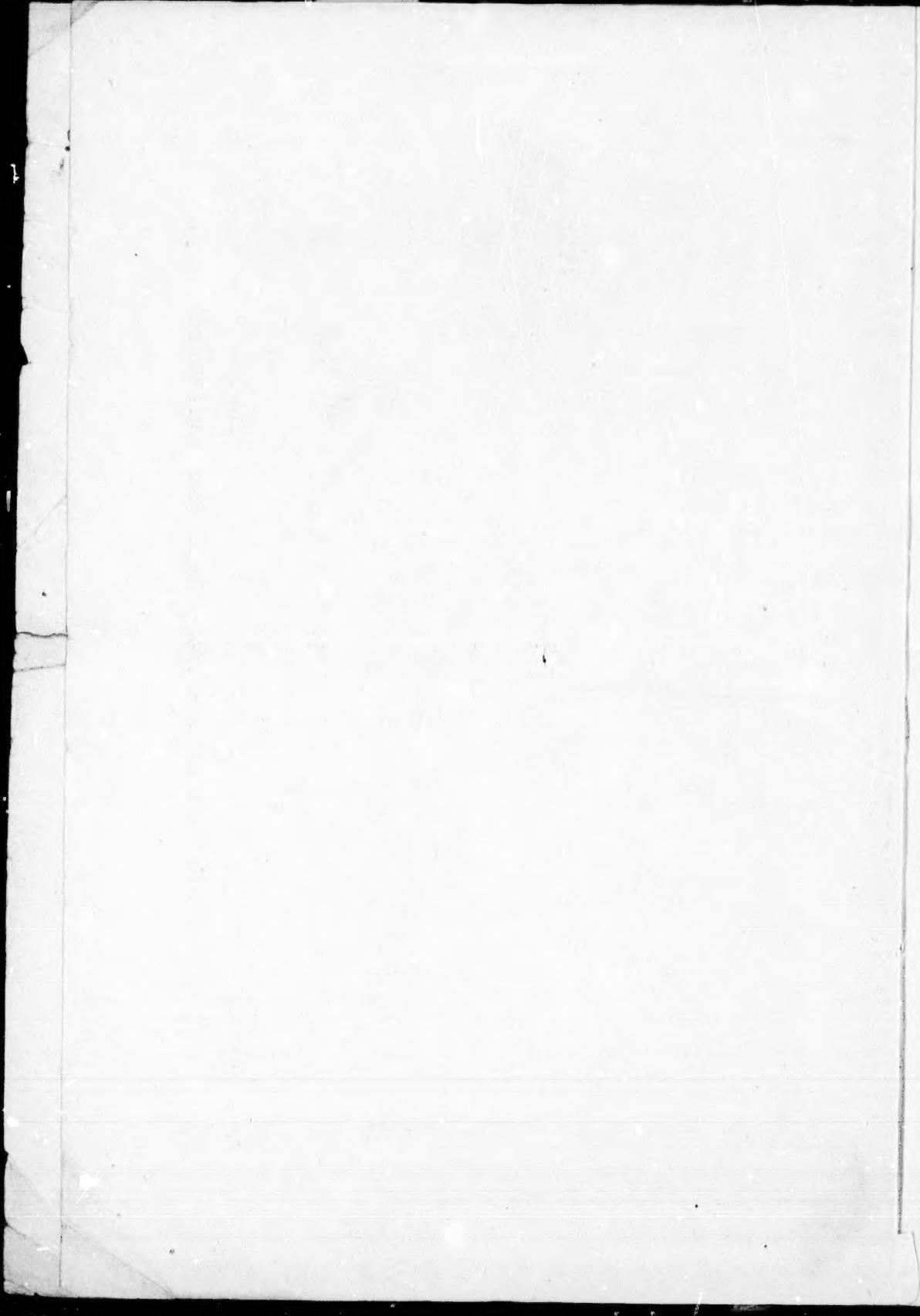
SAINT JOHN, N. B.:
1896.

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- 1—Last of the Mon'ding
Shops. 2—Wreck of Machine
Shop. 3—Ruins of Engine
Room, etc. 4—Ruins of Moulding
Shop. 5—Office Vault.
Slop. 6—Area once covered with
buildings.

PARTIAL VIEW OF THE RUINS FROM THE NORTHEAST.



THE STORY OF A CRIME.

In years past, one of the possible defects of the maritime provinces as a region to invite the tourist was the absence of old ruins. That this was a defect common to most parts of the American continent did not help the matter, for the tourists were chiefly from the American people who came to Canada and wandered down east in search of something more quaint and curious than they could find in their own country. They were fairly satisfied with the old-world aspect of Quebec, and sometimes took a passing interest in the remains of Fort Cumberland, Port Royal and Louisburg, but they wanted more, and especially when they reached St. John, which they knew as the city of the Loyalists, and of which they had read in their guide books in connexion with the story of La Tour. They expected at least to find some ruins here.

They were disappointed in their quest. They found merely a busy and progressive city, rapidly advancing in the number and extent of its industries and with a population increasing in a proportionate ratio. There was no room for ruins, and the minds of the people were on the present and future rather than on the past. St. John was enjoying a prosperity which promised much for its future. There had been no sudden accession of capital or enterprise, nor had the numerous industries been put forward as experiments. The position of the city as an industrial centre was the result of a steady growth, clearly to be seen in the statistics of its trade and commerce from year to year. During the preceding 20 years, the amount of tonnage owned in the port had more than doubled, until St. John was the fourth port in the British empire. In those 20 years the population of the city had increased at the rate of 33 per cent and was steadily growing. St. John had more than 600 manufacturing establishments, employing nearly 10,000 hands and paying out between three and four millions of dollars every year. In the five years preceding 1875 the figures of the manufacturing establishments had doubled

themselves, and it was the opinion of a careful inquirer into the condition of our industries that, with proper care, the figures would be doubled in the following five years.

Then the fire of 1877 came, which was bad enough, and after it came the National Policy, which was worse.

The Story of Twenty Years.

In the last 20 years some of the industries which then flourished and promised to flourish have become utterly extinct, while the population has not only not increased, but has not even held its own. According to the last obtainable figures it has decreased about five per cent. in the city of St. John. The natural rate of increase is computed at two per cent. a year, so that had the population merely held its own without any immigration, it should have gained 40 per cent. It not only failed to do that, but actually suffered a further reduction of over five per cent. Was the fire responsible for this?

That it was not, that there was another and far reaching cause is found in the fact that in the ten years between 1881 and 1891, the total decrease in population in seven important counties of New Brunswick, including St. John, was no less than 13,000. In only four of all the counties of the province was there a gain beyond the natural increase, and these were four with a large French population, namely, Gloucester, Restigouche, Victoria and Westmorland. Kings county, with no allowance for natural increase, lost a tenth of its people in the ten years. Charlotte, adjoining St. John on the west, suffered an equal loss. Even the great farming county of Carleton had been unable to hold its own. For the first time in the history of New Brunswick, the province failed to make an advance in the course of a given decade, and the population of what had been the most progressive counties showed a material decrease.

The national policy was inaugurated in 1878, and from that date, according to the census figures from 1881 to 1891, it showed what it could do for the maritime provinces. It is still showing

what it can do to discourage and depress our industries. In 1891, the total number of industries in the old city and Portland was 13 less than in the old city alone in 1875. In these only 3,680 hands were employed, where in 1875 the old city had given employment to 9,513, while the annual wages for St. John and Portland were \$1,197,796, as against \$3,318,874 in the old city alone in 1875. Since 1891, the condition of affairs has grown still worse, by the killing out of other industries, including the Harris foundry and car works.

This is not the blue ruin cry. It is a presentation of facts too serious to be ignored, and it points to a condition of things for which a remedy is demanded. The city of St. John is not on the verge of ruin, nor is it likely to be, but it does not hold the place which it should hold, nor has it approached to anything like the position which was confidently predicted for it a score of years ago. That it has flourishing industries at the present time and that its people have faith in what they have undertaken in recent years, does not prove that St. John has been aided by the national policy, but that it has made a brave struggle to hold its own in spite of that policy.

And There are Ruins.

The tourist travel to the maritime provinces has increased within the last 10 years, and the seeker for curious sights may now find all the ruins he desires. He may see ruined farm-houses on abandoned farms as he travels through the country, and he may find once flourishing villages now inhabited chiefly by women and children and men who have passed the age for active work. The young men have gone, and under another flag are earning the bread denied them by the workings of a protective policy in their native land.

Nor are the ruins confined to the country districts. Not a few are in what were once the busy parts of the city of St. John. Most of them are of industrial establishments which have been simply abandoned for want of work and are gradually falling into decay. They are not all of this kind. The most notable of all the ruins are those which have been directly created by the act of the Tory government in one of the boldest and indefensible jobs to which the people's money was ever diverted. These ruins cover an area of several acres in the heart of the city, the grounds

once occupied by the New Brunswick foundry and the transaction by which they were made ruins is known as "The Harris Land Job."

What the Phrase Means.

Despite of much that was said at the time of this notorious deal, the full story of the transaction and its results has never been told. It is a matter of much greater importance than the ordinary elector has been led to suppose. The phrase "Harris Land Job," means more than that the government, supported by Messrs. Hazen, Skinner and McLeod, as members from the city and county of St. John, perpetrated a job at the expense of the people. It means more than that, more than four years ago, \$200,000 of the people's money was appropriated without warrant to buy a property which the government did not need, and which it has not yet used and cannot use without an additional and enormous expense. There would be scope enough for comment if it meant only this, but it means much more.

It means that by a single touch of the hand of a paternal government, aided and abetted by J. Douglas Hazen, M. P., and his colleagues, a great industry was closed for all time. This industry had flourished for more than three-score years, and had grown great in the years when high tariffs were unknown in this province. It was one of the few industries which the national policy could not kill. Indeed, in a government blue book printed in 1885, James Harris & Co. are quoted as saying: "The national policy has been a benefit to our business." They were ardent Conservatives who enjoyed a large share of government patronage, and probably believed what they said. A few years later their works were closed, not having died the slow natural death of many other local industries under the national policy, but having been slain at a blow by the government which makes that policy a part of its platform.

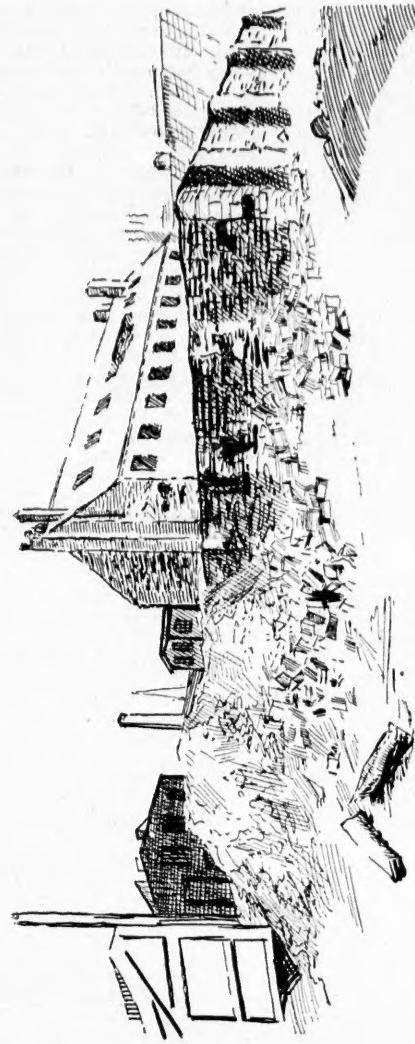
This is a part of what the term "The Harris Land Job" means, but even this is not all. It means the collapse of an establishment which paid out on an average some \$2,400 every week of the year, equal to an annual subsidy of \$125,000, which employed an average of 300 men, and directly and indirectly contributed to the support of a very much larger number. With the closing of the works all this money was withdrawn from circulation, the hundreds of employees were driven out of the city to

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VIEW OF PART OF THE RUINS FROM THE NORTH-WEST.

"THE NATIONAL POLICY HAS BEEN A BENEFIT TO OUR BUSINESS,"—JAMES HARRIS IN 1884.
THE SKETCH GIVES A PARTIAL IDEA OF WHAT THE NATIONAL POLICY PARTY HAS DONE FOR ST. JOHN UP TO 1896.

seek a living elsewhere, and the days of prosperity become but a memory with hundreds of small tradesmen over a large area of the northern section of the city.

In other words, Mr. Hazen and his associates, by a secret bargain, which had not even the sanction of a Tory parliament, deprived the city of its one most important industry, and gave the people in return only a heap of ruins. How this job was carried to its iniquitous completion will be shown later. Before this is done, it will be well to find a modern "sermon in stones" by a visit to the ruins.

AMONG THE RUINS.

In the Path of the Destroyer of the Prosperity of the People.

"The ruins are easy of access, close to the government railway depot, and conveniently reached by electric cars from all parts of the city." So might read a guide book for the information of visitors to St. John in the year of grace 1896. Five years ago a guide book would have described the place as the scene of the largest industry in St. John, and the Conservative orator would have quoted it as an illustration of how an industrial establishment which had been established prior to the national policy had been made still more prosperous by the operation of that policy. In those days there was a "No Admittance" sign at the entrance; at this day one may freely enter from front or rear, for even the fences have shared in the general ruin and offer no barrier to him who would learn a lesson of the instability of the work of man and the rottenness of the Tory policy.

Approaching, by way of Mill street, from the business portion of the city, the first glimpse of the ruins is had from the street in front of the Intercolonial railway depot, for they are on the railway ground, or on what was purchased under the false pretence that it was required for railway purposes. Perhaps the contrast between the real railway grounds and the bogus railway grounds is the more vivid, from the fact that the former are in such order that they seem of today, while the latter look as though the storms of generations had contributed to their desolation. The depot is a fair structure, save for the one blemish where rough boards cover the place where a clock should be. The depot was built more than 11 years ago, and again and again

during that time has the request come from the people that a clock should be put in the place designed for one. The government, as if to show its contempt for St. John in small as well as great matters, still continues to keep the blackened boards where they were originally put as a temporary covering. The expenditure cannot be made. It is one thing to go to the extravagance of buying a clock, but quite another thing to devote \$200,000 to the killing of a big industry and the making of ruins by the acre.

Seen from Foundry Lane.

One may easily reach the grounds from the railway crossing, but to understand the story the better mode of approach is by way of Paradise row and Foundry lane. Half a century from now, the latter name, if retained, will be a misnomer to provoke inquiry from the younger generation, and their fathers will tell them of how it was once the main entrance to the great Harris foundry, established by James Harris in 1831 and destroyed by a corrupt government in 1892. For two generations Foundry lane was the most busy thoroughfare of its size in St. John and Portland. Teams of all kinds passed in and out during the hours of labor, while the hurried tread of an army of wage-workers was heard day after day throughout the year at morning, noon and night. All is silence now, and one who walks here treads in the footprints of decay.

A portion of a high fence, crazy-looking and apparently ready to fall, but held by stout posts, contains the gateway, and marks all that is left of the enclosure at this part of the grounds. At the top, a strip of the boarding, differing in shade of paint from the rest of the gateway, shows that something has been removed. It was here that for year after year was displayed the sign, "James Harris & Co., New Brunswick Foundry." Securely fastened there it weathered the storms and gales of season after season and seemed likely to stay for generations to come. One night in January 1891, while the works were still in operation, this sign fell from its place with a crash and lay face downward on the ground, as though its time had come. A week later, the citizens of S. John, learned with anger and amazement that the Harris Land Job transaction had been completed with the concurrence of Mr. Hazen and his colleagues, and that the works were to be closed forever.

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At the left of the entrance, before passing the gate, are the stone foundation walls of a house which has also shared in the general destruction. Entering the yard, a scene of desolation is presented, which is without a parallel in the city and county of St. John. Save that the destruction has been more complete, that the number of standing walls is proportionately smaller, and that there are no signs of life, it is a type of St. John as it appeared on the morning of the great fire. There are simply acres of ruins. The Harris property, lying behind the lots owned by other parties on Mill street and Paradise row, occupied nearly the whole of the large block enclosed by Mill street and Paradise row, Southwark street and the line of railway close to the depot. It also included some lots on Paradise row. At a rough estimate the area occupied the works was about five acres; on it were no less than 22 buildings, chiefly large structures. A portion of these, near the railway line, have been allowed to remain, their windows roughly boarded up, and the buildings themselves empty. Only one or two of them, close to the track, have been put to any use, and then only for the storage of a few cars and snow ploughs. These dark, deserted buildings, once the scene of busy toil, might well bear upon them the inscription:—

CLOSED

On Account of the Death of
A GREAT INDUSTRY.

And over the entrance gate, where stood the sign which fell as if in shame, should be inscribed the words: "Ichabod—the glory is departed."

Acres of Land Laid Waste.

A comprehensive glance shows a large area of arid ground, the surface of which is composed chiefly of coal ashes and refuse from the foundries. This circumstance tends to give a permanency to the desolation, for on such a composition of soil even the thistle will not flourish, and kindly nature gives no mantle of green to hide the barren prospect from the eye. Even a goat could not gain a support from the five acres. Broken brick, little heaps of mortar and other debris from the wrecked buildings are seen on every hand. Piles of ashes here and

there show where were once forges and furnaces. The outlines of stone foundations can be seen here and there, and one foundation is fairly complete. In other places even the foundations have vanished, and only one who has some memory of the place as it was can realize that on such spots stood buildings of large proportions. The place is utterly deserted. Even the boys who for a time found profit in getting stray scraps of iron no longer resort here, for they have cleared the ground of every loose fragment of metal, while here and there are traces of where they have dug in search of further rewards. A lonely and melancholy tree, which ought to be a weeping willow, stands at the eastern boundary of the yard and seems as strangely out of place as it would be in an arid desert. Portions of a dismantled trip-hammer, too heavy to be easily removed and too stont to be broken up by ordinary means, alone remain to show that on this ground once stood the famous New Brunswick foundry.

Not far from the gate is the highest part of the ground, which falls away on the south and west with a considerable slope. Had government felt enough shame to clear away the rubbish caused by its wrecking of the buildings, the yard would be an ideal spot for an open air meeting and an address to the electors by the Liberal candidates. Few words need be said, but volumes could be comprehended in the simple sentence: "If ye seek a monument of Toryism, look around you." There may be reasons why Liberals should not trespass on this government preserve, but there is no reason why the government candidates might not address their constituents were the rubbish first cleared away. Their words, too, need be few. They could repeat, as they will do elsewhere, the promises and prophecies rung over the land by Sir Charles Tupper and his followers at each election since 1878. Then, having recited the promises, they too could ask the people to look around and see the fulfilment. But the rubbish should be first cleared away. Many of the auditors would be the much injured tradesmen of that part of the city, to whom the closing of the works meant a loss of honest money. They are a patient and law-abiding people, but the provocation would be great, and there are altogether too many broken bricks lying loose around the ground.

EVIDENCES OF THE CRIME

Some of the Desolation Directed by a Visit to the Ruins.

A comprehensive view of the ruins of the Harris foundry, and of the ground made waste by the Conservative government, has already been given. The story of the rise and fall of this, the greatest of St. John's industries, has yet to be told. In the meantime, it may be well to see of what the ruins are composed, and what they were before they were smitten by the hand that would smite St. John today, by depriving it of even the opportunity to compete with Halifax as a winter port.

In the last sketch, the visitor was left standing at the outer gate, gazing at the desolation which meets the eye on every hand. There is no sadder sight to be found in St. John than this dreary desert in the actual centre of the city. It appeals to the ordinary sense, and needs no words to point a moral to the most careless observer. There are those who lament over the departed glories of by-gone centuries, but here are the ruins of what gave bread to the people of our own day and generation. He who seeks a theme for sentiment needs not to chant his "Ilium fuit" over the crumbled walls of Louisburg, or to speculate on the fate of ancient Norem bega. Here are fallen walls of greater import to us than the ruins of France in Acadia, and here has vanished a miniature city, well nigh as completely as did that which the early explorers sought in vain on the shores of the Penobscot.

The ruined fence sways with the wind, but it will not fall yet awhile. It stands there, shattered and shaking, as if to invite the passer by to enter and see what vandal hands have made desolate. A portion of one of the sliding doors, hung from the top, sways to and fro in the breeze, with now and then a dismal groan. It is the only animated thing around the premises.

Took the Money but Left the Safe.

At the left, close by the entrance gate once stood the offices, the brain from which the motions of the great industry were directed. Nothing remains of these except an oblong structure of brick, strongly suggestive of a mausoleum falling into decay. It is about twelve feet long, eight feet wide and with a height of nine or ten feet. In the front is a rusted iron door, tight shut, with the knobs and fittings gone and the keyhole

choked with rust and dirt. This structure was the vault where the books and money of the firm were kept, and it has been left standing because it was so solidly built that no small effort would be required to demolish it. It seems to have been built for protection against robbery, as well as against fire, and even the Conservative government cannot easily get into it now, though what might be accomplished were any of the people's money known to be there is quite another question.

Dean Swift was once passing through a desolate part of Ireland when he noticed a new building, which proved to be a powder magazine. Thereupon he remarked:

Behold a proof of Irish sense,
Here Irish wit is seen;
When nothing's left that's worth defence
They build a magazine.

In like manner, it may be said that the government, having deprived the community of the money that was once so freely distributed from this source, has left standing the empty treasure vault as a mocking memorial of the 60 years of prosperity which the Harris Foundry could shew as its noteworthy record.

Only the Foundations Remain.

At the right, as one advances, are seen the solid stone foundation walls of what was evidently a building of considerable importance. This was the wheel moulding shop in which a score of men were kept busy turning out from 40 to 50 wheels a day. It was a high structure, and from the substantial character of the foundations it was evidently built with the idea that it was to serve its purpose for many generations. None of the other moulding shops had such a solid substructure, but this was of such a character that should the large building which it supported be destroyed, the work of rebuilding could be carried on with the least possible delay. At the south side of this was a fine engine room, the foundations of which alone remain.

What happened to the wheel moulding shop and engine room? Why, the government simply tore them down, as it did about ten other buildings on these premises, to give the people an idea that it intended to put the ground to some other use. For weeks past, the residents in the neighborhood have been expecting to see a crowd of workmen sent there to do duty in the same way again in anticipation of the elections, but so far even this pretence has not been made.

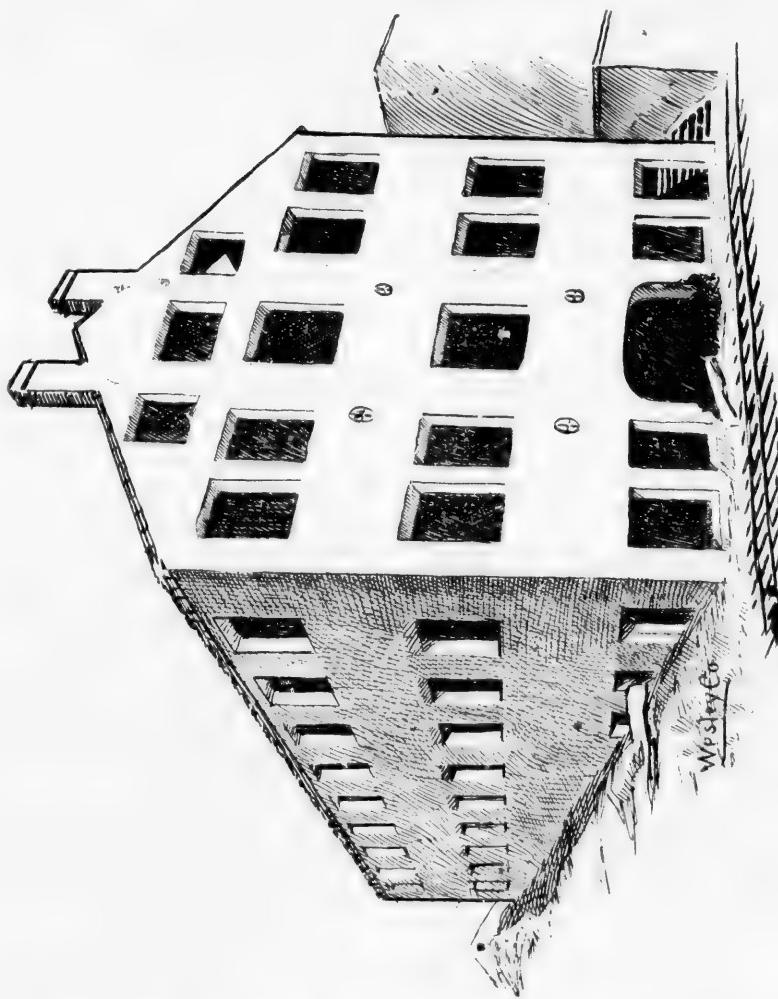
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WRECK OF THE HARRIS MACHINE SHOP.

THIS VIEW IS FROM THE SOUTH SIDE TO SHOW WHAT THE STRUCTURE WAS LIKE. THE CRACKED CHIMNEY AND SHATTERED WALL ARE ON THE NORTH SIDE.

THE WRECK OF THIS MACHINE SHOP IS AMONG THE THINGS DEFENDED BY THE CANDIDATES OF THE TORY "MACHINE" IN ST. JOHN.

West of this ruin is a large wooden building used as a wareroom, which has not yet been torn down. The windows are boarded up to protect the glass. The building has never been put to any use by the government. Near it once stood a building where the marbelizing of mantels, etc., was done, but not a trace of it remains.

It is in this corner of the yard that the trip hammer frame, of which mention has been made, is to be seen. To the uninformed it might be taken for part of the equipment of a modern great gun. It appears to be in good condition, and one naturally asks why it should be so when everything else looks as though the Gothe and Vandals had invaded the land. The answer is that it belongs to the Harris estate. The government did not buy it, and therefore it has neither been wrecked nor carried out of the country.

Near here stood a dry house, which has vanished and left no trace behind. So much for the western side of the yard.

Standing on Historic Ground.

Advancing from the gate toward the centre of the yard, one can scarcely realize that at this utterly deserted roadway was once one of the busiest, and at times most crowded parts of the city. There were occasions when it was literally choked with men, horses and teams busy about the work of the firm, for at one time all the raw material used by the firm, and all the manufactured products, had to come and go through this avenue. In the chronicles of industries of St. John, it is historic ground.

It is historic ground in another sense. Here during the campaign of 1891, stood Mr. Ezekiel McLeod, the Conservative candidate for the City of St. John, and declared to the workmen that, should the government be returned to power, ten cars would be built in those works where one was built at that time. Within a year from that day the ruin of this industry had been accomplished, and the men who had voted for the government candidate were looking for employment in distant fields of labor. Mr. McLeod is out of politics now, for he has been rewarded with a judgeship, but Mr. J. Douglas Hazen, his colleague and his abettor in this transaction, comes back with a smiling face and winning way to ask the workingmen of St. John for their votes.

The Saddest of All the Sights.

This is the highest part of the ground

and on it stands the most conspicuous ruin, visible from all points of approach. It is the wreck of the machine shop. It is the most significant of all the sad sights on this slaughterground of human industry, and it appeals to the people in its hideous deformity as the damning evidence of a great crime. A government less reckless of public opinion, less indifferent to the feelings of the city of St. John, would have had the decency to tear it down, that it might not be an eyesore to the citizens and a sight to make the stranger think the country is going to the dogs. As it stands, close to the depot, it is one of the first things to catch the eye of the incoming passenger as he nears his journey's end.

The machine shop was a very solidly built brick structure, three stories in height, with a slate roof. It was an especially busy place where 50 men were steadily kept at work. On the ground floor or basement, are still seen the heavy foundations of a powerful steam press used in the fitting of car wheels, for it was here that the wheels were turned and finished. The floor above was devoted to general machine work, while the lighter work was done on the floor above. The building still stands firmly, though a fearful wreck. The doors and windows with their casings have been roughly torn away, leaving ragged edged apertures, while the storms of four seasons have taken off much of the slate roof, leaving it open to the sky. Most of the woodwork has been taken away from the interior, and though there still remain some plank they are as shaky and rotten as any in the whole Conservative platform.

Further Evidences of the Crime.

The northern end of the machine shop presents a frightful appearance. Adjoining it stood the engine room, the only trace of which is a pile of broken brick and a deep hole where was once a well for the supply of water. Some of the timbers of the engine room had their ends held in the wall of the machine shop, and in the work of demolition these timbers were roughly torn out, leaving great holes which look as though the building had been the target of field pieces during a siege. The upper part of the chimney has tumbled down, and in the lower part is a gaping fissure, which gives the idea that the whole chimney structure may fall at any moment. It would be a dangerous place for children to play, but children never seek these dreary grounds. Even the vagrant cats seem to shun the place.

Next to the engine room, on the east, was the steel moulding shop, of which only scattered brick mark the site. Still further to the eastward was another moulding shop in which some 40 men were employed. It is still standing, but it is empty and has never been used for any purpose since the government acquired the land. The windows are boarded up, and the once busy place is suggestive of a tomb—the tomb of a dead industry.

From the office at the gate a series of buildings extended eastward, all of which have been swept away. They consisted of a store room, an oil room, an iron rack and the blacksmith shop. The latter term does not give the ordinary reader an idea of what was done there, for it was not a blacksmith shop such as one usually has in mind. Fourteen fires were kept going in it, each requiring two men, so that with other help this blacksmith shop had a force of at least 30 active workers who were masters of their trade. Nothing is left of it but some ashes and loose brick.

Returning to the machine shop, a curious and instructive sight is seen. It is some undelivered stock, piled carefully on the ground, and it consists of about a hundred immense car axles intended for the Chignecto Marine Railway, an enterprise to which the government has given great concessions, and to which it has sought to give even more, whether they were merited or not. The axles are rusting and are likely to rust there for some time to come.

Spared by the Destroying Hand.

A number of buildings are still standing, most of them in good order, but shut up and devoted to no use, nor likely to be devoted to any. The pattern and scraping shop is still there, and there are the larger buildings near the railway line. These consist of the passenger car shop, the snow plow shed, erecting shops and mill.

Another brick building yet standing, but a wreck like the machine shop, is the dry house. Only the brick work remains, for even the floors have been taken away. In front of this is a fire hydrant, which has been allowed to stand in the general ruin, though some of the buildings remaining are certainly worth protection. Near by is a very dangerous hole, to step into which would mean a fall into the deep pit which once contained the water metre. The government evidently assumes that nobody has any business to wander there, and there

is no danger of any of its own officials walking over this useless area of ground.

There is more to be told of these grounds and of how they came to be what they are. The story of what St. John's greatest industry was and how it was blotted out of existence, should be of no ordinary interest to all classes of readers, for all classes were affected by this monstrous and indefensible wrong. For four years these acres of ground, purchased with indecent haste, have lain idle and are likely to so remain. A vast sum was paid for a property which has been put to no use, and a most important industry was crushed for all time.

Perhaps, to be just, it should be stated that one or two of the buildings close to the track have been used. One of them has had some cotton and other goods stored in it, and half a dozen snow ploughs find a safe shelter there from the summer's heat. The building is well adapted for them, but at a cost of \$200,000 it is the most expensive snow plough shed on the face of the earth.

ONCE A GREAT INDUSTRY.

The Early History of the Foundry, and How It Grew with the Years.

The reader who has carefully followed the description of the ruins of the Harris Foundry, and still better the citizen who has visited the grounds and seen the havoc wrought, can realize what a fearful sweep has been made of what was once a veritable hive of industry. He will see the Harris grounds as they are today, and if he knew them as they were less than five years ago, he can make his own comparisons and draw his own conclusions. The ordinary citizen, however, has but a slight idea of the growth of the works from a small beginning, 65 years ago, and their development into the most important industry in the city and county of St. John.

James Harris, the head of the firm until his death in 1888, was one of the best known citizens of St. John, as well as the largest employer of labor. He was a native of Annapolis, N. S., and came to St. John when a young man, nearly 70 years ago. He had learned the blacksmith and edge tool trade and his first business venture here was as a partner with Thomas Allan, a machinist, for the carrying on of their several lines of handicraft. Their shops were on Mill street, then better known as Portland Bridge, on the site now occupied by

J. McGoldrick & Co., and they conducted a hardware store in connection with their trade. This was the beginning of the afterwards famous firm of Harris & Allan.

As Complete as Any in Canada.

Both being good workmen and prompt in their dealings, it did not take them long to acquire the beginning of the reputation they maintained for the rest of their career. Their business prospered, and in 1831 they started a small foundry on the site of the present ruins, to which they removed their blacksmith and machine shop. They began according to their means, not venturing beyond their resources, and for the first half year the blast for their furnace was by the medium of bellows worked by relays of men. In due time power was procured, but it was several years later when they introduced the fan blast. In the meantime they were increasing their capacity as fast as circumstances would permit. Year by year saw the enlarging of the original buildings and the erection of new ones, until there arose a village of shops and warehouses connected with the foundry, and the most approved machinery was in use. For many years the principal work was the manufacture of stoves, for which there was a great demand in all parts of the province. They were sent as far up the river as Woodstock and Houlton, as far west as St. Stephen, and as far east as Shediac and the North Shore, while large quantities were shipped to Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. As the works grew, however, heavier work was done in the way of mill machinery and large castings for other industries, including fittings for vessels, etc. There was also a fine trade in implements of agriculture. It was a busy and prosperous place long before St. John had railway connections, and the era of railways brought the foundry a still greater volume of business. The work of building cars began about 30 years ago and developed into large proportions. When Mr. Hazen and his colleague, Mr. McLeod, were trying to justify the payment of such an extravagant sum for the property, Mr. McLeod spoke of the establishment as "the most complete car works in Canada. Everything in connection with a car was made there. I think there were not more complete, if as complete, works in Canada."

Messrs. Hazen and McLeod had not a word of protest against the most complete car works in Canada being put out of existence and an enormous sum

being paid for five acres of land, when less than two acres had been considered necessary in the first instance.

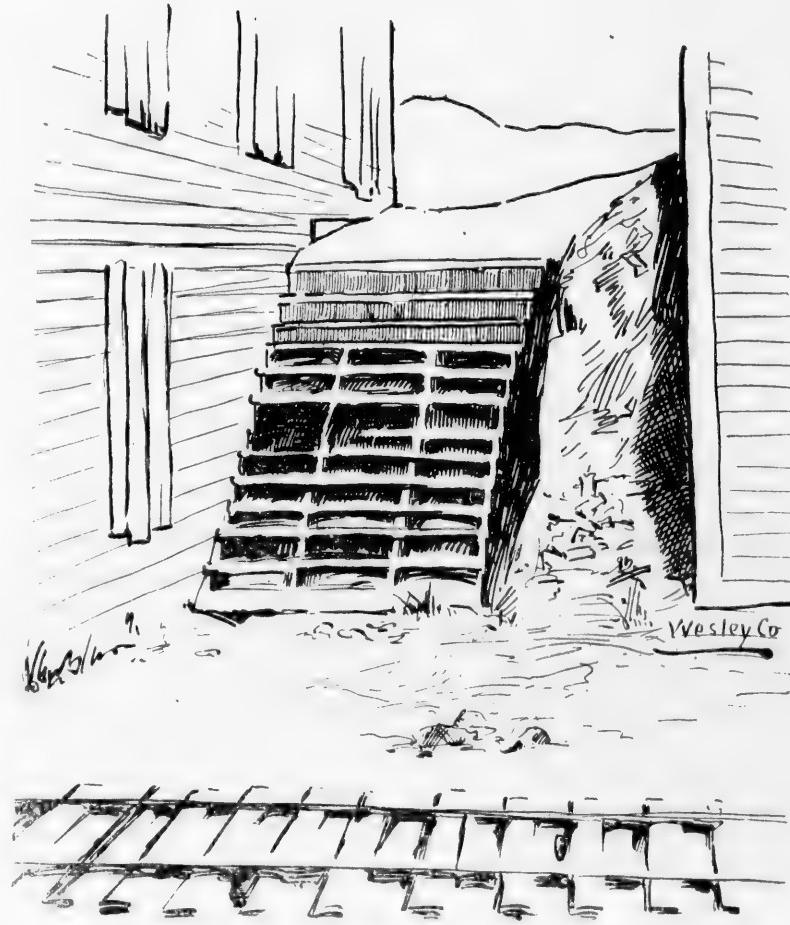
Prosperity Not Due to Protection.

Harris & Allan prospered, and when Mr. Allan died, in 1840, Mr. Harris acquired his interest in the business. At a later date others became associated in the enterprise and the firm was thereafter known as James Harris & Co. It is worth noting that the prosperity was established in an era of low tariffs. Prior to 1867 the iron duties were very light. For many years after the foundry was established much of the iron used in the industry was on the free list and the duty on other kinds ranged from 10 to 15 per cent. During this period, too, the owners of the foundry had to contend with severe losses. Three times in one period of about a quarter of a century their premises were scourged by fire, with a total loss of \$100,000, on which there was no insurance. Each time they rebuilt and improved their works. All this was before the days when a protective tariff was deemed possible in this country. It was long before the exigencies of a party, driven from power for its corruption, inspired the idea of a National Policy to again delude the people.

The Real Foundations of Success.

It would be a long story, but one full of interest, to trace the development of the Harris works from the small hand power-foundry in 1831 to the vast establishment which flourished in 1891, complete in all its departments, and seemingly the one industry that was destined to continue to thrive, whatever might happen to the National Policy. It could produce anything from the lightest and most perfectly finished work to the heaviest castings. It was identified with the interests of our railways, our shipping, our agriculture, and all the varied machinery of modern times. It made stationary and marine engines. It made parlor mantels, which were the counterpart of marble. It could and did equip a rolling mill, and it could and did turn out the passenger cars which make modern travel a luxury. It did a vast amount of railway work of all kinds, including coal cars complete, and trucks, axies and other fittings for all kinds of rolling stock. Its contracts were for hundreds of thousands of dollars. The fires burned continually in its large cupola furnaces, the forges gleamed, and the hammers rang in its blacksmith shop, while in every building were skilled workers, who knew not an idle moment. Mr.

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FROM TRACK LEVEL TO FOUNDRY YARD

THE STEPS GIVE A PARTIAL IDEA^Y OF THE HILL THAT MUST BE CUT AWAY TO
BRING THE YARD DOWN TO THE LEVEL OF THE TRACK. THE YARD IS AT LEAST 15
FEET HIGHER THAN THE TRACK.

Harris was a thoroughly practical man, who had begun at the foot of the ladder and learned every detail of the work. His watchful eye could tell at a glance whether this thing or that, from the clinching of a rivet in a kettle to the casting of tons of metal, was in the least degree as it ought not to be. He knew what each man ought to do and saw that he did it, and he exacted thorough discipline in the army which he commanded. A wrangle between two workmen meant the discharge of one of them, and more than once an employe, arriving in the morning with the grime of yesterday's labor on his hands or wrists, was sent home to learn the lesson of keeping himself clean.

Why It Was Bound to Succeed.

These things are worth stating as showing the thorough system on which the works were conducted and the splendid order in which Mr. Harris kept the business at the time of his death, in 1888. The only faint plea that is ever raised in extenuation of the government's great crime in destroying this industry is that the death of Mr. Harris practically meant the decline and death of the works. To say this is absurd in the face of the actual conditions. Such an establishment, built up and conducted on the soundest principles, could not be dependent on one man for its continued existence. It flourished during the life of Mr. Harris and it continued to enjoy a splendid patronage from the government and the general public after his death. It is true the estate became involved after that event, but even were the heirs unable to conduct the enterprise with profit, the works were there, solidly established and for others to run. Does anybody think that they could have lain idle or that they would not be in operation at this day had the government not laid its destroying hand upon them?

Evidence From a Good Quarter.

Just here it may be well to quote a bit of evidence from an accredited authority on the government side. In the St. John Sun of April 3, 1889, nearly a year after Mr. Harris died, the following statement was made:

"Within the past two years Messrs. Harris's car business has developed wonderfully—so much so, in fact, that larger and more commodious works are required. A new mill expressly for cutting and preparing the lumber used in the construction of cars has been erected

and on Saturday last the machinery in this building was set in motion for the first time. Other improvements have been made for the purpose of giving additional room and facilities in the work of car construction. This branch of Messrs. Harris' establishment was extensive before these improvements were made; now it is doubly so. About 282 men are given work all the year round in the car works, and the wages paid range from \$7 to \$10 per week. Of the 282 men employed 152 are married. The foremen and superintendents receive from \$13 to \$24 per week. Messrs. Harris also conduct a large foundry and machine shop and rolling-mills, and all the car wheels required are made by them."

What was true in 1889 was not to be explained away in 1891, when the bargain for the purchase was made. With the car works alone, employing 282 men, it will be seen that the establishment bade fair to continue to increase, if not in the hands of one concern, then in the hands of another. Everything was there and the taking hold of an established enterprise woud have been a very different matter from the starting of a new one.

Crushing Another Industry.

Fronting on Paradise Row, and located on a part of the land bought by the government, is a building which bears the name of James Wales, brass founder. Mr. Wales, senior, now deceased, began to work for Harris & Allen in 1833, and introduced brass founding into their enterprise. He cast the first set of rudder braces made in St. John. Twenty years later he began the brass foundry business on his own account, and in due time was succeeded by his son, James Wales, the present proprietor. The Wales foundry, despite of severe losses by fire, did a fine general business, but after the Harris concern undertook car work, there were enough orders from it to keep the brass foundry busy, and other customers had to go elsewhere. In this way Mr. Wales sacrificed his general custom and relied upon the Harris concern. When the latter was killed out by the government, the brass foundry found its business gone, for the lines of general custom had gone elsewhere and could not be brought back. It is doing little or no work at this day. Thus did the government not only kill the great industry of the Harris foundry, but it crushed the brass foundry as well.

A Railroad Yard in the Air.

The two lots occupied by the Wales house and foundry were part of the Harris property, though not in the foundry enclosure, but wholly distinct from it and fronting on Paradise row. Yet the government purchased these also, though for what possible use it would be hard for anybody to determine. The buildings, like the greater portion of the five acres purchased, are on much higher ground than the line of railway. Anybody who visits the place and stands on the track below the ruins of the machine shop or the snow plough shed, can see at a glance that the foundry yard is at least 15 feet higher than the railway level, and that in order to use the greater portion of the five acres of land for track room they must either mount extraordinary grades, or that the hill must be cut down at an enormous expense. As a prominent government official is reported to have said when he visited the scene after the purchase was made: "What on earth do they want to use it for, anyway?"

Men of a Disbanded Army.

The Harris establishment employed, on an average, 300 men within its works. Sometimes there were only 250, and at other times there were nearly 400. Men well qualified to speak give 300 as a fair estimate. These, on an average, earned \$8 a week. Some earned \$2 a day, and many were on piece work where they did still better. The weekly pay roll ranged well up to \$2,400, or \$125,000 a year. Every dollar of this was distributed around St. John, for the workmen were free buyers, so long as they had the money. They were a benefit to all classes of trade, but especially to the small grocers of Portland, where most of them lived. The homes of the workmen were found all along the line from Sherbrooke street to the further end of the City road, while quite a number lived on Fort Howe, where the many tenantless houses raise their mute protest to this day against the iniquity of the Harris Land job. Ask the landlords of this and other localities what they think of that job and its results.

All Spent Among the People.

The influence of this large output of cash was felt in every branch of trade. There were Saturday nights when the proprietors of shops had to go without their supper to wait upon the crowd of customers, though in these days they

can enjoy their evening meal at leisure. Small groceries would find an increase of from \$150 to \$250 in the extent of their Saturday night trade with the Harris employees, where now they sit waiting for the buyers of petty purchases. The expenditure was so widely distributed that all classes of dealers got a share, and even the livery stables reaped a rich harvest. Go and ask the people around the foot of Portland what the closing of the Harris works meant to them, and you will realize in part what an injury has been done by the government to St. John. But this is not all.

At least 1,500 people, the workmen and their families, were maintained by the Harris establishment. These not only circulated the \$125,000 a year, but their numbers helped to make the census figures of 1891 less deplorable than they then would have been had the works been closed a year sooner. When the Harris industry ceased the workmen sought employment elsewhere, taking their families with them. Many of them left the province. The census of 1891 showed that in the ten years preceding the population of the city and county of St. John had decreased 3,390, to such an extent, in fact, that it could have only two representatives in parliament where for the past quarter of a century after confederation it had been allowed no less than three. With a continued decline, aided by such a wholesale exodus as that of the Harris workmen and their families, what will be the decrease if the Tories are allowed to remain in power until the next census is taken?

For of the many that go few return, and the National Policy does nothing to bring others to replace the loss.

The Loss Among All Classes.

Apart from the army of workmen in the Harris concern, the skilled artisans, the painters and laborers, there were many others who were in part maintained by the industry, in the way of truckmen and those to whom the handling of material gave employment. Large sums were paid out in this way which were not on the employees' pay sheet, and all classes feel the loss sustained by the government's act. It is difficult to tell how much the city has lost in actual money as well as in population.

The Harris establishment was one which more than any other distributed its money at home instead of sending it abroad. The bulk of its material was produced at its own doors. In the building of cars, for instance, little was



Imported save such material as oak wood, which cannot be got in this part of the world. In native products the purchases were large, and the paint account alone with one firm was to the extent of \$1,000 a year. Other material was used in proportion, and the revenue of many a small mill owner was largely increased by the annual consumption of woods.

Better still, the classes chiefly benefited by the expenditures were those who most needed it, and who now keenly feel its loss. Small dealers who flourished in those days are now either driven out of business or have been forced to limit their expenses and make every effort to gain a mere living. The blow was a cruel and wanton one to be struck by the hand of a paternal government. The transaction was one which even such a strong conservative as Mr. Adams of Northumberland felt bound to denounce as "a job unparalleled in the history of purchases," and "a crime against the people." He spoke more wisely than he knew.

Where Toryism Sinned Most.

For Mr. Adams was merely condemning the government of which he was a supporter for paying an extravagant price for a property which it did not require. He did not refer to the consequences of the act, which he characterized as "simply a job," in the crushing of an industry, the driving out of workmen, the withdrawal of \$125,000 in wages and much more in other disbursements from a small community. He did not speak from a St. John standpoint, but from the standpoint that it was an extravagant job which no man could justify.

And what said Mr. Hazen, the man who stated in the debate that he had visited the works and canvassed the votes of the workmen less than a year before the sale? He defended the job. He attempted to justify the act of the government, while he waxed indignant at the insinuation that a part of the purchase money had been devoted to the repayment of election expenses. It was only on the issue of needless extravagance, coupled with the idea that something unclean was behind the transaction, that the matter was discussed in parliament.

Yet, the mere purchase of this property, of which more will be said later, was only one feature in this story of a crime, and not the feature which directly and vitally affects the people of St. John to this day. Far worse were the

results in the closing and demolition of the works, the scattering of the workmen and their families, the withdrawing of many thousands of dollars each week from the retail trade of St. John, and the pinching of the classes least able to bear the burden. These questions did not arise in the debate, but they are a part of the issue now. Mr. Hazen has appeared as the defender of the job. Can he look at the results and dare to defend it now?

DONE WITH INDECENT HASTE.

How the Land Job was Hurried in Spite of Protests from the Public.

The idea of having additional land for railway purposes in connexion with the Intercolonial station at St. John was not a new one in 1891, nor was it then for the first time that the purchase of a portion of the Harris property was in contemplation. The need of more track room in the vicinity was conceded, and the station master from time to time so reported to the heads of his department. What was needed was room enough for any spare freight cars that might be at this point, and there were several chances to obtain this outside of the Harris lands. As long ago as when Sir Leonard Tilley was a member of the Conservative government, Mr. Harris was asked if he was willing to sell a narrow strip of the southern side of his property for railway purposes. He was averse to the proposition and pointed out that the government could do as well by taking land farther to the westward of the station. Nothing was done at the time, but after the completion of the C. P. R. the need of a little more accommodation was again urged by the station master, and his request was indorsed by Mr. Pottinger, the general manager at Moncton. Then attention became again directed to the southern side of the Harris property.

It is not probable the wildest flight of fancy had up to that time ever pictured the purchase of the whole of the Harris property. All that was thought of was a strip, 80 or 100 feet in width, alongside of the track. Some years before, the Moore property, having a front of 100 feet on Mill street and running back 160 feet had been purchased by the government for railway purposes, but this lot would not give the required space without some of the ground in the rear. Had the station master at St. John suggested in his communications that the whole

five acres were needed for track room, it is probable an official would have come from Moncton by the next train, with power to suspend the station master should the supposition that he was insane prove to be true. Yet, because the station master suggested that more accommodation was needed, the government actually did take the whole of those five acres, including three lots outside of the limits of the foundry yard, two of them on Paradise Row and one on Foundry Lane.

All That Was Really Wanted.

The Moore property, fronting on Mill street, was on ground level with the track, and so was the strip running east of it and included in the area of a prolongation of the Moore northern line and the line of the railway track. There was a ready some track laid on the level portion of the Harris property, which ran into some of the buildings used for the construction of cars. This strip, in connexion with the Moore property, would give all the required accommodation to the railway. It comprised an area of 78,000 superficial feet and was already in shape to be used without additional expense beyond the laying of such extra tracks as might be required. It was all the railway needed and gave more track room than there was any possibility of using.

It happened that the northerly line of this strip ran through one or two of the buildings erected by the Harris concern in recent years, but even allowing these buildings to remain and be used by the concern under an arrangement with the railway, there was still more track room than was actually needed. Failing such an arrangement, the total value of the buildings, at a very liberal valuation, would still have made the ultimate cost of the strip much less than half the sum paid for the whole five acres, and the Harris concern would still have had room for the buildings to do the same class of work. This interesting line, however, was possibly the foundation of the suggestion that instead of buying the strip alone the whole property should be taken over, whether it could ever be used or not.

In any case, there is no doubt the railway officials were thoroughly informed on the question, and that all the points in the case had been placed before the government when the original proposition to buy only the 78,000 feet was made. Everything appears to have been carefully considered, and a price

satisfactory to the owners was agreed upon. The amount named was \$30,000, a very large sum for the back end of a lot, and relatively a larger sum than was paid for the Moore property, though the Moore valuation was unquestionably an excessive one.

A False Standard of Value.

As the price paid for the Moore property, a few years before, has been quoted more or less as an argument to justify the price paid to the Harris concern, it is well to consider what relation the one bears to the other. The Moore lot had a large building, or series of buildings, on it, where there had been an extensive nail factory. The lot contained about 16,000 superficial feet, and had a front of 100 feet on Mill street, one of the most important thoroughfares in St. John, the great artery of the stream of travel between the North and South ends. Close to the passenger depot and on the highway where public travel was constant from early morning to late at night, the frontage gave it a commercial value which could not for a moment be considered as any index of the value of the land in the interior of the block, with not even an entrance from Mill street. The two properties were not in the same class in respect to the mere value of the land.

To illustrate this, let anybody consider the value of the land where the Masonic temple stands fronting on Germain street or that on Charlotte street opposite the Hotel Dufferin. Then let him go from one street to the other by the convenient way of what was once known as Smith's alley. There is a large unoccupied area in the middle of the block between the two streets, but if it was wanted for any purpose nobody would think of valuing it at the rate of valuation of the properties with frontage on Germain and Charlotte streets. Indeed, about seven years ago, when the Opera House question was new, the owner of a portion of this interior of the block, not only offered to give it free of charge, but offered other inducements to have it accepted as a site for the proposed building. At the same time, he held at a high value his lots with a frontage on Charlotte street.

Some months ago, the tearing down of a building on Germain street, opposite the market, impressed many citizens with the idea that then was the time to run a street through to Chipman's Hill. The idea was that, before more expensive buildings were put up the right of

way could be had at a small cost. If the city had proceeded to lay out the proposed street, does anybody suppose that arbitrators would have valued the land at figures in any way approaching the value of the properties fronting on King street? As regards the mere commercial value of land, there was the same difference between the Moore lot on Mill street and the Harris property in the middle of the block. The latter property was approached from Paradise row, a street which had no value as a business locality except that given to it by the presence of the foundry.

Premonitory Symptoms of a Job.

The decision having been reached to buy the 78,000 feet for \$80,000, the latter sum was put in the parliamentary estimates for 1891, for "additional railway accommodation at St. John." Even then, despite of this plain statement of what was wanted, the idea was current that something more was to be attempted, for it was understood that the Harris concern had no objection to unloading its whole property on the government, while it was also believed that political wires were being pulled for a bold deal, the inwardness of which could only be a matter of conjecture. On June 4, 1891, Mr. Davies, of P. E. I., from his place in parliament asked replies to these questions:—

1. What is the additional property accommodation at the St. John railway station, for which a vote of \$80,000 is asked, wanted for?

2. Was the necessity of this additional property accommodation reported upon by any Intercolonial or other railway official? If so, by whom?

3. How much land is at present being taken for the \$80,000? Is it proposed to take any more land adjoining? Has the land proposed to be taken been valued by arbitrators? If not, is it to be so valued?

4. Does the land proposed to be taken belong to the Harris estate, Harris & Co., Ltd., or James C. Robertson, or any or which of them?

To these questions the following answers were made by Mr. Bowell, on behalf of the government:—

The additional property proposed to be purchased is to furnish further railway accommodation for that station. The station master at St. John complains of the lack of station yard accommodation, and the chief superintendent and district superintendent concur in his views. The quantity of land to be taken has not yet been defined. The land will be valued by arbitrators before being purchased. The property, it is understood, belongs to the estate of the late James Harris.

Mr. Bowell's statement that the quantity of land to be taken had not been defined must be taken in the limited sense

that the exact metes and bounds had not been fixed as regarded the narrow strip. It may have been in contemplation to except the land where some of the structures were and so not interfere with them. In any case his words referred only to the level strip for which the \$80,000 had been asked.

The assurance that the station master had said extra accommodation was needed at St. John, and that the officials concurred in his view, probably satisfied the house that some land really was wanted, and so the subject was dropped. Parliament was prorogued on October 1, 1891.

When Was the Bargain Made?

Between the latter date and the end of the year is an interesting record best known to members of the Conservative party, which has not yet been disclosed to the world. In that period was consummated the crime of killing the leading industry of St. John. How long the big deal had been in contemplation cannot be known. It may have been the original compact, and the estimate for \$80,000 may have been introduced as a wedge, merely to give the idea that more land was required. It would have been preposterous to have then asked for the \$200,000, and the proposition to purchase the whole Harris property must have been defeated by the votes of honest men of both parties. Yet no one not in the scheme can say when the malice prepense had its birth, and at what period the plot to purchase the whole five acres was planned. If Mr. Ezekiel McLeod is to be believed, there was no thought of it in the spring of 1891, for during the election campaign, as has been narrated, he stood in the Harris yard and told the workmen that if the government was sustained there would in the early future be ten cars built in the works where one was built at that time. It cannot be believed that there was even then a bargain to take over these works at the expense of the people and to destroy them to the great injury of St. John. There are people who have thought this, but there is no proof of anything of the kind. If there was such a bargain Mr. McLeod, to judge by his words, must have been innocent of any knowledge of it.

Defying Law and Precedent.

Nor can it be thought that Mr. Hazen, when he went through the shops in the same campaign and asked for the votes of the workmen, had any idea that in

less than a year the works would be silenced forever and those workmen driven from St. John. Mr. Hazen, however, stoutly defended the job after it was accomplished. So did Mr. McLeod.

The campaign of 1891 was fought, and an expensive fight it proved in St. John and elsewhere. The government were returned to power, and then the first was heard of the Harris Land Job. The election took place in March, and the \$80,000 was in the estimates of the session which began on April 29. The item provoked the inquiry already quoted, the answer was given and the item was passed, along with the other estimates. When parliament was prorogued in October, there was authority to expend \$80,000 for land actually needed for railway accommodation. Beyond this there was no authority whatever to proceed in the matter.

Yet before the first of the year the agreement for the purchase of the whole property for the sum of \$200,000 was made, without the sanction of parliament and in violation of the terms of the audit act. The Tories were bold enough to do anything. Intoxicated with success in having again been returned to power, they felt that they could safely defy law, political morality and public opinion, and trust to the next few years to have the transaction hidden from view by new issues to distract attention, as the cry of loyalty to the old flag had done in 1891. The day of reckoning seemed a long way off, and some who had most to fear from the people might by that time be shelved beyond the reach of their ballots. The job was completed.

Business Men Protest.

When the first rumors of the proposed purchase reached St. John, it was stated that the government intended to erect freight sheds on part of the Harris land. This idea did not command itself to the merchants, and a transportation committee of the board of trade was appointed to inquire into the matter, in August, 1891. This committee consisted of W. F. Hatheway, W. S. Fisher and J. J. McGaffigan, Conservatives; John Sealey and G. Wetmore Merritt, Liberals, though the party question did not come up. They reported that in view of the bulk of the I. C. R. freight being handled by merchants at or near the North and South wharves, it would be unwise to purchase any more property north of the depot, except the strip necessary for track room. They further suggested the

purchase of York Point Slip and the property in the vicinity, where the government at that time, as now, owned considerable land. This report was referred to the council of the Board of Trade and was forwarded to Ottawa, but the government paid no attention to the protest.

Done With Indecent Haste.

The deed transferring the whole of the five acres of the Harris property was executed on January 2, 1892, and put on record on the 25th of the same month. These dates are worth noting when it is remembered that parliament was called to meet on February 25, a month later. Had the transaction been one that could stand criticism, the honest and obvious course would have been to wait for the few weeks that intervened and get the sanction of parliament for the purchase. There was no other straight course to take. Authority had been given for the purchase of a strip of land for \$80,000, but during the recess, without a shadow of authority, five acres had been purchased for \$200,000. If the bargain was a good one, as Mr. Hazen afterwards claimed, there was no reason why the promoters of it should not bring it to the attention of the house in the first place. If it was a bad one, as is now apparent, there was every reason why it should not be rushed through secretly when no voice could be uttered in protest against it. The straight course was not taken. On the contrary, the matter was hurried along with indecent haste to anticipate any adverse action in parliament, and the deed was made public just one month before the meeting of the house.

The conspirators knew what they were about and that delay meant danger and defeat. The proposal to buy the Harris property could not have been forced through parliament, and they knew it. With the transaction completed however, they could unblushingly stand up and say, in effect: "Gentlemen, you may say what you please. It is true we had no authority to do this, but we did it. The deed has been signed and put on record. We have the property, and what are you going to do about it?"

The Opportunity of a Lifetime.

This was the opportunity of Mr. Hazen's political career. It is not likely that he will ever have such another. Here was his chance to rise superior to party or faction and speak for the interests of the people he represented, the people who were literally robbed by this

most notorious transaction. Supposing that he felt he had any ground for defending the purchase in respect to the value of the land, did he not realize the graver results that were so inevitable—the closing of an established industry; the driving away of artisans; the distress to shop keepers and house-owners, and the withdrawal of tens of thousands of dollars from circulation among all classes of citizens? Why did he not defy the party whip, and stand up for the interests of St John? He knows best. He uttered no word of protest, but he defended the job, while as good a Conservative as he, and one who has done his party infinitely greater service, was not afraid to denounce it as a public crime, and say there was no principle on which it could be justified.

CONDEMNED ON ALL SIDES.

The Land Job Discussed in Parliament and What was Said of It.

It has already been told that a committee of the St. John Board of Trade, of whom a majority were Conservatives, protested against the purchase of any land north of the depot, except such as was absolutely needed for track room. They did this as practical business men, in the interest of the community. The proposition to have freight sheds there met with their emphatic disapproval, for the very sound reason that it would increase the expense of truckage greatly in excess of what would be necessary were the sheds in the vicinity of York Point slip. Anybody who is familiar with the locality will see that the latter place is very easily reached from the Marketsquare, North and South wharves. A still broader view of the question was taken by one of the Conservative members of the committee, Mr. J. J. McGaffigan, in his remarks before the board.

The government owned then, as it does now, the wharf on the north side of York Point slip and a large area to the northward of that. Between the railway land and the lots fronting on Main street are what remain of some of the old timber ponds and shipbuilding sites. These ponds were once valuable properties, but changes in the conditions of our commerce, as well as the disappearance of mills from this locality long since put an end to their business. In addition to this the building of the railway line from the depot to the cantilever bridge made the ponds near Mill street mere corners

of land covered by water, an eyesore, if not a menace to the health of the people in that neighborhood.

Mr. McGaffigan's idea was that the government should utilize the property it already had, and add to it by filling in the waste area between the track and the lower part of Main street. As the pond owners had been awarded ample damages when the railway extension was built, the cost of acquiring the remainder of the pond area could not be large. Even allowing a very liberal price for it, however, a splendid piece of railway property could be made, extending from York Point slip to Main street, and including the Robinson warehouse on Smyth street. This was what Mr. Harris had pointed out when the government wanted a strip of his property, years before. The whole area not already owned by the government could have been secured for much less than the Harris property cost, and then there would have been ample railway accommodation for generations to come. There would have been room for all the freight cars that could be gathered here, and there would have been freight sheds close to the business centre of the city, while in due time might have come the extension of the wharves and the harbor improvements already urged upon the government by merchants, before St. John was compelled to build an elevator, at its own expense, on the west side of the harbor.

Besides all the advantages apparent from the acquisition of the property not already owned by the railway at this point, there would have been a wonderful amount of benefit to the locality. Instead of the ponds being eyesores at the foot of Main street, as they are today, there would have been a change equal to that made years ago by filling in the Mill Pond west of Mill street. Land would have been taken which is now put to no use, the value of property in the vicinity would have been greatly increased, and the money expended would have been of direct benefit to the people. The Harris foundry and car works would have been in operation to this day, instead of being crushed out of existence and a desert left where they stood. The government had a great chance to build up this part of St. John. Instead of that, they paid an enormous price for a property which was useless to the railway, killed the city's greatest industry, and turned the place into ruins.

Some Big Figures.

When parliament met, in February, 1892, the Harris land job had become a

matter of history. The item of \$120,000 for "additional property accommodation" at St. John station was put in the estimates, and the matter came up for discussion on May 13. According to the explanation of Mr. Haggart, minister of railways, the Harris estate had wanted \$175,000 for the smaller triangular block and \$275,000 for the whole. The land had been purchased for \$200,000 by private agreement, instead of submitting it to arbitration or having it expropriated. The government had, however, had the property valued by two citizens of St. John, each valuation being independent of the other. Each of these gentlemen had the assistance of an architect and builder in making up his estimate. The result of their calculations was surprising. Mr. Charles H. Fairweather valued the triangular block at \$131,153, and the whole property at \$313,457. As the citizens of St. John well know, the late Mr. Fairweather was a man of high character, and with an unblemished reputation for probity. He was not, and did not claim to be, an expert in the valuation of property, but in this instance he seems to have started on the false basis of supposing that the \$25,000 paid for the Moore property was the standard by which to fix the value of the Harris property. That it was not, and why it was not, has already been shown, but Mr. Fairweather was undoubtedly sincere in his effort to fix a value. The estimate put on the buildings was \$61,318, and this must have been on the calculation of the architect as to what it would cost to replace them wholly were a new establishment being started. It could have no reference to their value as they stood, for a detailed estimate, made up by a former official of the Harris company, had made their value only \$21,800. Admitting the latter figures to be too low, there is no question that Mr. Fairweather's figures were far too high.

Still Higher Figures.

Mr. Charles A. Everett, another gentleman who was not an expert, was even more liberal in his allowance. He valued the triangular lot at \$317,000 and the whole at \$49,659. Thus it will be seen that these gentlemen differed to the large extent of more than \$36,000 in their calculations, and that one of them thought the property worth \$109,000 more than the Harris concern had asked for it when it tried to drive the best possible bargain with the government. The only inference is that, however conscientious these valuers

may have been, they started on the wrong basis of the value of the Moore property, and that they were not otherwise conversant with the subject on which their opinion was asked. That no protest was made by the opposition when the Moore property was bought at an excessive price was due to several reasons. The sum total paid was much smaller than in the Harris case, the old buildings on the lot were unsightly and in danger of fire, the land was possibly needed by the railway, and not only was the neighbourhood improved, but no industry was killed by the government taking possession. That no protest was made is no evidence that the price was a fair one.

Though Mr. Fairweather thought the Harris property worth more than \$313,000 and Mr. Everett seems to have considered it good value at nearly \$350,000, Mr. Bowell informed Parliament that the Harris concern asked \$230,000 or \$240,000 for it, and, therefore, the government had offered \$20,000 for it, which was accepted. It may be that the government in thus getting the property at \$150,000 less than one of its supporters said it was worth, and \$40,000 less than the owners claimed it was worth, thought that it was doing a brilliant financial transaction, if not playing a pretty sharp trick upon the unsuspecting owners. There were some other sources of information which the government failed to consult.

One of these was the assessment roll of the city of St. John. There the property, land, buildings and plant, were valued at only \$66,000, an amount less than one-fifth of what Mr. Everett thought the land and buildings alone were worth, and less than one-third of what the government gave for it. Either the assessors were tender-hearted or incompetent, or the government paid twice, if not three times as much as the property was worth.

There was another source of information now to be found in the records of the courts, and earlier by consultation with financial men. The Harris company had become involved in litigation with the Halifax Banking Company, and the trial took place on January 12, 1892. At that time Mr. J. G. Taylor, manager of the bank at St. John, swore that in a balance sheet furnished him by the Harris company during the previous year, the foundry, including leased property, was valued at \$93,401. Mr. Pitcairn, cashier of the bank, also swore that James C. Robertson had

repeatedly told him, that the value of the real estate on the books of the Harris company was under \$100,000, and that Mr. Robertson had held out, as an inducement for the bank to make advances, the almost absolute certainty of a sale being effected to the Intercolonial railway, which sale Mr. Robertson was exceedingly desirous of effecting.

Other Land Values.

Apart from this evidence, there was further proof of the value of land in the Harris property as shown by the purchases in recent years. Though the government paid \$200,000 for 216,000 feet of land, the Harris concern had bought 5,000 feet of the Hazen property for \$2,000, and 3,200 feet of the Wales property, with buildings, for \$1,000. These purchases were of recent date. Some years before 8,000 feet of Moore property had been purchased for \$3,000.

So much for the value of the land and the bargain the government made, which bargain Messrs. Hazen and McLeod defended with great zeal as a good investment. In the heat of the debate Mr. McLeod seems to have imagined the property to be even more valuable than had been claimed, for he asserted that the construction shop was of brick and within 15 or 17 feet of the railway wharf whereas it is a wooden building and several hundred feet away from any wharf.

The attack on the land job was led in parliament by Mr. Davies, who was followed by able speakers on the Liberal side. The defence by the Conservative side was made by the ministers and by Messrs. Hazen and McLeod. They failed to justify the government's act. The most memorable denunciation came not from the Liberals, but from Mr. Adams of Northumberland, a firm believer in the Conservative party, who had examined into the merits of the case and heard both sides. No attempt to explain the job could satisfy him. Here are some of the remarks he made:—

"I am quite clear that this property has been purchased for three times its value, beyond all question. * * * I am not here simply because I am a Conservative, believing in and admiring the policy of the Conservative party. I do not suppose there is a man who more fully believes in the Conservative party and its policy than I do. But if I have to vote in favor of grant of \$200,000 for the purchase of the Harris property in St. John, then I want to go back to my people and tender to them my resignation, saying to them: I cannot any longer represent you in an honest way,

and you must select some other man to carry out your ideas. I must do that before I can justify such a vote as my friends are trying to justify tonight.

"You are tonight committing a public crime against the people of our province. You are attempting to force an opinion on this legislature which is not true. There is no principle upon which it can be justified. You cannot produce any evidence to justify this legislature voting \$200,000 for the purchase of this property. No practical man, from the chief engineer down to any workman on the railway, will say it is required for the convenience of the railway or the public."

Later in the debate Mr. Adams further said:—

'The government must stand at the bar of public opinion to answer for their action. The very price paid for this land, stamps it as such that no man in the dominion, be he a minister or a citizen, can justify voting \$200,000 for the purpose. No Conservative, no Liberal, no Grit or Tory can justify it. That meanest Tory that sits here tonight can not put out his hand and state that the \$200,000 paid for this land is an equitable price, by reason of common sense, prudence or justice. It stands unparalleled in the history of purchases under any government. There can be no possible reason submitted in the presence of parliament or in the presence of any railway man in the country, to justify it."

This was all bad enough, but as regards the people of St. John, the matter was still more serious. Here are some of the results:—

The government took a property which it did not require, has not used, and cannot use without a very great additional expense.

In doing this it closed for all time the largest industry in St. John, an establishment which had been in operation for three-score years, and would have been in operation today. It turned a busy place into a heap of ruins and sent hundreds of workmen and their families out of the country.

The government, like a destroying army, swept away the whole work of years, leaving only dust, ashes and ruins. A scene of industry was blasted at its touch and became a desert.

And all this in order to consummate the notorious Harris land job, which even partisan zeal cannot successfully defend.

Is it any wonder that the narrative of what was done and how it was done has been entitled "The Story of a Crime?"